



❖ The Capitol Hill Monitor ❖

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AND YET ANOTHER PAGING NOTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR D.C.

If you're confused about Washington area alphanumeric paging notification systems, you should be. Fire buffs, scanner enthusiasts and other news hounds are increasingly relying on these alphanumeric paging services to keep tabs on breaking news. But during the past few weeks in the Washington area several changes have occurred to these local paging services, leaving some of the most knowledgeable subscribers in the dark.

For two years, notification systems in the Washington and Baltimore area, started by fire buffs, have been alerting hundreds of subscribers of breaking news stories as they unfold. Subscribers to the paging notification systems, for example, learned of the World Trade Center bombing, shootings at DC police headquarters, and countless other newsworthy incidents before the broadcast media first aired them.

An extensive network of fire buffs, scanner enthusiasts and others, commonly known as dispatchers, provide the news information to their pager-equipped colleagues as it happens. Such notification services, along with personal paging service, range from \$14 to \$20 per month.

The Public Safety Network (PSN), founded by Paul Bowling and Charles Hutchinson (who left PSN to start a Baltimore system), marked its second year of operation on Jan. 15. During PSN's two years of operation, area fire buffs have witnessed the birth of two other alphanumeric paging notification systems: FireCom, founded by Sheldon Levy and Vito Maggiolo; and Baltimore Metro Dispatch (BMD), a fire-only no-

tification system founded by Hutchinson to better serve fire buffs in the Baltimore community.

Owners of the Breaking News Network (BNN), a well-established paging notification system based in New Jersey, surprised many fire buffs when they announced plans last month to enter the Washington and Baltimore market -- bringing yet another paging notification system to the nation's capital.

"BNN fear," one BNN dispatcher claims, has encouraged some unification among the local groups. Fearing that BNN was romancing the majority of PSN's dispatchers, many of whom were already pursuing greener pastures, PSN's Bowling made an agreement with FireCom in December to simulcast FireCom's paging to PSN for a 30-day period -- giving PSN time to recruit new blood. A merge between FireCom and PSN, however, is believed to be in the works.

In recent weeks, BNN recruited more than a dozen fire buffs and scanner enthusiasts to dispatch for its new paging system which should be operating later this month in the Washington-Baltimore corridor. BNN staffers say the network intends to model its DC operation after what it has in New Jersey. In New Jersey, BNN operates and sells pagers out of a retail storefront, where it maintains a "duty desk" several hours each day to supplement paging notification. The New Jersey store also offers a toll-free customer service number and in many cases even sends new pagers to customers by express mail.

How do all of these changes affect the area's radio notification systems? Citywide Radio, closely linked with FireCom, continues to operate on 452.975, using CTCSS tones of 103.5 and 167.9

Hz. Monthly rates for Citywide Radio this year are \$4. In spite of a rate increase to \$10 a month, Metropolitan Radio, which is affiliated with PSN, continues to use leased repeater space in Silver Spring on 462.0 with a CTCSS tone of 107.2 Hz.

To supplement its paging system, BNN hopes to place an affordable radio notification system on-line in the Washington area later this year. BNN's repeater rates are expected to be price-competitive, as they are in New Jersey, to encourage information exchange between as many radio enthusiasts as possible.

Similar notification systems operate in some 20 areas across the country and several others are in the planning stages. Technological advancements, which make alphanumeric paging possible, as new as they are, have created an almost-instant news environment which is still in its infancy. No longer do we wait for news, it comes to us. "Wireless wire services" might be a better description of these notification systems, which liberate news and information. If you're still confused about alphanumeric paging systems and all this techno-mumbo-jumbo, don't worry, it'll get worse.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Baltimore Metro Dispatch:
410-442-8762

Breaking News Network:
1-800-826-0655

FireCom and Citywide: 301-930-4200

PSN and Metro Radio: 301-701-PSN4

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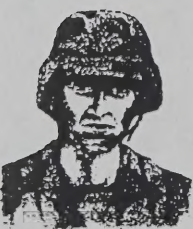
BARRY AND THE 900 CRUISERS RETURN.

The new year brought back DC Mayor Marion Barry and what sounds like a rejuvenated version of his former protection detail. Like the Kelly administration, the mayor's protection detail remains on the MPD Command Channel, 460.425. But unlike Kelly's detail, the officers no longer identify by phonetic letters followed by single-digit numbers, as in Alpha 1, Bravo 3 and Echo 2. Officers on Barry's new detail identify using cruiser numbers in the 900s -- just like in the old days -- even though the numbers duplicate cruiser numbers currently assigned to the patrol districts.

In addition to 460.425, officers on the mayor's detail frequently operate on one of the patrol district's 458 MHz surveillance "D" channels for close-in communication. Security apparatus being installed at Barry's home in the high-crime Wilburn Mews neighborhood of Southeast, includes a guard shack, security cameras and a wrought-iron fence.

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FT MEADE MPs GET NEW FREQUENCY.

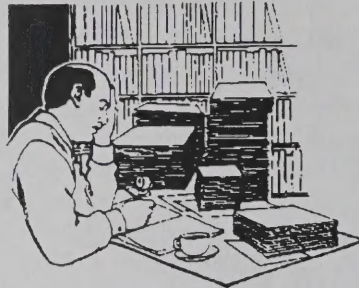


MPs at Fort Meade no longer carry VHF General Electric MPE portable radios as they once did. MPs, says Firefighter Charles Hutchinson, now carry Motorola UHF System Sabers. The MPs, he says, formerly used 163.5625, simplex. Then, after experiencing bleed-over from other agencies, the MPs switched to 163.5375, also simplex, which interfered with the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The new system uses a repeater on 407.4 with an input of 413.575. The Fort Meade fire department, Chuck adds, also received new ra-

dios, but the radios continue to operate on 407.3, simplex.

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NewsScan



by Brent Baker

MPD GROUNDS HELICOPTER DIVISION. The DC police department's Juno helicopters were grounded earlier this month. MPD's public information office refused to acknowledge if the helicopters were still flying. But in any case, says an MPD spokesman, the aviation branch still exists and personnel are still assigned. Since the beginning of the year, all requests for air support by MPD officers has been referred to the Park Police Department's Eagle helicopters. The aviation division's status, noted one officer, could change depending upon the budget crisis.

MPD's NEW CAD SYSTEM. In a recent copy of Simulcast, Officer Cookie Marino expresses disappointment with MPD's new CAD system which went on-line this past summer. She says that 98 percent of the Communications Division's workers are not satisfied with the system. "From the very first day," she writes, "not only were we not ready for these computers, but these computers are not compatible for the volume of calls for service we receive. As a dispatcher, this system is too time consuming for all the air traffic. The system has been on-line for approximately three weeks and we have encountered

major problems within this system, but the system went on-line anyway."

To status one 10-4 [two-officer] transport unit in service requires 15 moves, she says, as opposed to three moves with the former system. Too many moves are required just to be able to get a run out or put units in services. If an officer says "no report," the computer, she says, still asks the dispatcher to enter the number of arrests made. The computer often does not recommend the nearest units for assignments. The computer, for example, recommends "a sector one car in some cases for a sector three assignment, or sector two for sector one and so on."

"A unit comes in service for their tour of duty so they are entered by badge number, however, the dispatcher can't use their car because their car shows up on another district dispatcher's screen... Wagon 61 was given an alarm to check one night in 2D sector 2, after assigning this wagon to a 2D assignment, the wagon, along with the assignment, ended on the 3D board."

In addition, she says, "runs are lost for periods of time, runs go to the wrong zones and not all badge numbers can be entered. In some cases in order to put a certain car in service, because that officer's badge number wouldn't enter, we have to loan them our badge numbers... There are some really good features here, but they need to program the system around this police department, not the department around this system... We do not need a more sophisticated system, we need a more workable system to the needs of the citizens we serve and all the police officers we assist on the street."

NEW ANTENNAS UPSET ARLINGTON RESIDENTS. The Arlington County Board voted to allow a digital mobile phone company to put an antenna atop a water tower in northern Arlington despite neighbors' concerns about possible health hazards.

According to the Associated Press, in January the board agreed to allow American Personal Communications to put six antennas on the Lee pumping station at 2400 Wakefield St., where the county's emergency communication equipment has been housed since 1991. APC reduced the number of proposed antennas from nine to six and agreed to such conditions as limiting APC's access to the site. APC also agreed to establish a liaison person to address resident concerns about operations at the tower.

A TRUNKED SYSTEM FOR PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY? A planned 22-channel radio system would improve communication for Manassas and Prince William County public safety workers but would cost taxpayers \$20 million, about \$5 million more than originally projected, states the lead of a recent Potomac News article.

The system, writes Potomac News reporter Steve Bard, would require four 214-foot-tall towers, including one in the Lake Ridge area and another a mile north of Haymarket -- an issue officials expect will generate controversy. Opposition, he notes, is also expected from the volunteer fire and rescue leaders. New radios and other items are expected to cost the volunteers \$3.4 million, nearly half their annual tax-funded budgets.

The system is projected to cost \$5.2 million more than proposed in 1991 because original estimates were based on a smaller-scale system, according to a Dec. 6 county report. Original estimates did not include the cost of a fourth radio tower, microwave equipment to integrate the system and other items.

The system is not expected to be operational for at least another five years. "If a truck spews hazardous materials on Interstate 95, for example, county police, state police and fire and rescue personnel will be able to coordinate strategy on the same channels, something impossible with the present system."

Dead spots, one county official claims, will be eliminated. Along with the limitations of 1960s technology, the existing system offers too few channels, said Victor Shavers, the county's telecommunications chief. "County police, fire and rescue personnel, school bus drivers, maintenance and other employees have seven channels among them," Shavers told the Potomac News. "Manassas agencies have four."

Manassas Park officials expressed interest in joining the system but no commitment has been made. According to the Dec. 6 report, Manassas would pay \$3.4 million of the system's \$20.2 million total cost. Prince William would pay \$11.2 million, county fire and rescue volunteers \$3.4 million, and county schools \$2.2 million. County supervisors and Manassas council members have yet to approve the bulk of the funding. A vote is expected sometime this month.

NEW COLORS FOR MSP. MSP, says the December Bowie Blade-News, is painting its new patrol cars with the traditional olive base with black stripe, similar to the colors used by the agency more than 20 years ago. Troopers at the Annapolis barrack already have one of the three vehicles with the new colors, which MSP used in 1950s and 60s. The new design resembles the trousers of the trooper's uniforms, reporter Christopher Munsey notes. MSP switched from the old olive-and-black scheme to the current bright yellow in the early 1970s.

WASHINGTON'S CELLULAR ONE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDS NEW YORK ROAMING SERVICE. Since implementing a new fraud management system, CellularOne says it has "monitored an extremely high amount of fraud originating from the New York City metro area (including northern New Jersey)." As a result, Washington's CellularOne has temporarily suspended automatic roaming and call delivery services to its customers in the New York City area. Outgoing calls may still be made from the New York

City area, says a CellularOne customer advisory. The calls, however, "will be intercepted by an operator who will request credit card information for billing purposes."

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BECOME AN UNDERCOVER CHM INFORMANT! The Montgomery County Police Department seeks an emergency communications center manager who will be responsible for planning, managing and evaluating operational and administrative functions of the police emergency communications center. Duties include supervision, evaluation and guidance of subordinates; participating in developing, implementing and managing an 800 MHz communications system and much, much more! Salary ranges between \$40,278 and \$66,937. For details call 301-217-4100.



What -- that's not enough money for you? Well then, consider a similar job in the District which pays between \$75,599 and \$81,885. The DC government seeks an individual to serve as director of the public safety communications center (still under construction). Duties include managing and directing a planned consolidated center which will handle all of the District's 9-1-1 calls and dispatches to police, fire and ambulance units. Incumbent will initially complete development of the center and procurement of an 800 MHz radio system. For details call Tom Hoey at 202-727-6665.

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Jon Binstock, Charles Bowman, Dave Statter, Tom Yeatman and an anonymous member contributed to this month's NewsScan. As always, we are in constant need of articles and tour ideas. Please share your thoughts with one of CHM's tour coordinators or Alan. In addition, if you see any articles which might be of interest to the rest of us, please mail/fax them or merely provide us with the publication name and date. Full text of NewsScan articles are available upon request (please provide Alan with a reply envelope).

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**RUSSIAN
COLLEAGUE NEEDS HELP.**



"Why are scanners not sold in Russia?" you might ask after reading the July CHM article on

Nikolai Rudnev who anxiously wants a scanner. The answer, Nikolai says, is simple. "The old communist regime didn't wish citizens of Russia to have those scanners. You know, scanners are very serious toys... By the way," he adds, "there is no law in Russia banning scanners."

"I hope your club will help me," he writes. Nikolai has no scanner and dreams of someday being able to monitor the VHF and UHF radio spectrum like his American counterparts. If one of us has a working scanner that's no longer in use, Nikolai asks that we please keep him in mind. "Why doesn't he just buy a scanner?" one might ask. Nikolai says he would if he could, but he is unable to exchange the Russian Rouble for hard currency. He is caught in a bind. In return for a scanner, Nikolai says, he will send Russian souvenirs.

Most of the bands in Russia, Nikolai

says, are similar to those in Finland (see the April CHM for more details). No land mobile band, however, exists between 68 and 87.5 MHz in Russia, where it's used for radio and TV broadcasting. In Russia, Nikolai notes, three land mobile bands are the most active:

The 29.7-48.5 MHz band is used by the military, agriculture, industry, police, taxis and various other radio services. The 146-174 MHz band is the primary land mobile band in Russia. Users include police, fire, ambulance, city buses and others. The 300-350 MHz band is known as the "radio-telephone" band. The "Altai-3M" system operates in this band and provides mobile telephone service in about 100 cities of the former USSR. The 420-470 MHz and 806-947 MHz land mobile bands are used in Russia's bigger cities. The aircraft band is between 108 and 144 MHz in Russia.

If you wish to contact Nikolai, please write: Nikolai Rudnev, Lenina 5A-34, Stroitel, Belgorodskaya Oblast, 309120, Russia. Nikolai says any merchandise should be sent via registered mail, to avoid stealing.

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**A TALE OF
TWO EOCs.**

by John Korman

In December I toured Fairfax County's Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) in Annandale, just off Little River Turnpike. I was surprised with the similarity between the EOCs in Fairfax and Montgomery counties. One difference between the two centers is that Fairfax's is run by the police department, while in Montgomery County, the police and fire departments oversee their own operations. Both jurisdictions appear to use

similar computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems to receive and dispatch calls.

The location of Fairfax's EOC stands out. The center is in an old elementary school, while Montgomery's is in an office building. The major difference between the two is that one set of call-takers in Fairfax County handle the phones for fire, rescue and police calls. In addition, the fire/rescue dispatchers in Fairfax County are neither firefighters nor EMTs. I was shocked to hear that! My "tourguide" claimed the county plans to change that.

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**PUBLICATION RE-
VIEW: PopCom's
1995 Communi-
cations Guide**



reviewed by Alan Henney

If you like Popular Communications, you'll like the sixth edition of the Communications Guide edited by Harold Ort. Inside the \$6, 128-page guide you'll find more than a dozen PopCom-style articles, written by well-known PopCom columnists, covering both scanner and shortwave topics. This year's topics include: HF action in Haiti, keeping tabs on the world with shortwave, monitoring the aviation bands below 30 MHz, choosing the right scanner, maritime HF monitoring, scanning with coded squelch, single-sideband CB, Pacific island HF frequencies, monitoring EMS communications, how active antennas work, winter propagation and how hams can communicate to the space shuttle.

In the back of the guide are 37 pages of product listings. The listings include the specifications and suggested retail prices for base and portable communications receivers; base, mobile and

hand-held scanners; amateur and CB transceivers and miscellaneous accessories. What this section lacks is actual evaluation of the products (what to buy or not to buy, etc.). Retail prices and manufacturer's listed specifications are often misleading.

The last section of the guide includes a 16-page listing of contact information and other facts for dealers, manufacturers and importers of consumer and amateur radio equipment, publications and accessories. This is a quick way to determine who manufacturers or sells what and how to contact them.

This month's review publication was provided by the editor, Harold Ort. The guide can be ordered directly from CQ Communications, Inc., 76 North Broadway, Hicksville, NY 11801 or call 1-800-853-9797. The guide is \$5.95 plus \$2.50 shipping. Views and comments appearing in this review do not necessarily reflect those of CHM or represent an endorsement.

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Please address all correspondence to Alan. We encourage readers to submit material and to write articles which relate to the hobby. All submissions are subject to editing for both style and content. When submitting material please make certain we have your phone number should we have any questions. We welcome frequency and visitor requests, but please include a SASE.

Alan Henney
6912 Prince George's Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912-5414
301-270-2531 (voice)
301-270-5774 (fax)

Newsletter Staff:

Alan Henney, General Editor and Acting Treasurer
Mike Peyton and Dave Clark, Distribution
Brent Baker, NewsScan Editor
Willard Hardman, Executive Editor

The Capitol Hill Monitor is the non-profit monthly newsletter of the *Capitol Hill Monitors*. The newsletter keeps scanner enthusiasts abreast of local meetings, frequency profiles and other

topics of interest. Dues are \$8 and include 12 issues. Kindly make checks payable to Alan Henney. Membership will be prorated accordingly in the event of a postage increase.

Meeting Coordinators:

Mike Peyton,
Maryland Coordinator
(703-902-6241)

Ken Fowler,
Virginia Coordinator
(703-385-2165)

Frequency Forum Computer Bulletin Board:

We encourage computer users to log onto Jack Anderson's Frequency Forum computer BBS at 703-207-9622 (8-N-1). Frequency Forum is the official electronic gathering place for readers of the Capitol Hill Monitor!

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6912 Prince Georges Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912-5414

3 Issues Remaining

ALAN HENNEY

6912 PRINCE GEORGES AVE

TAKOMA PARK MD 20912-5414

CTCSS Cross-Reference Chart

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	Grp-Design
0.0	CS	0	0	0	0	CS	0	0			
27.0											
67.0 * @ XZ		1	1	1			1		1	111111	A L1
69.3 @ WZ											A WZ
71.9 * @ XA		2	2	2			2		2	011111	B L2
74.4 * @ WA		3	3	3			3		3	111110	A WA
77.0 * @ XB		4	4	4			4		4	001111	A L3
79.7 * @ WB/SP		5	5	5			5		5	111101	B WB
82.5 * @ YZ		6	6	6			6		6	011110	B L4 (YZ)
85.4 * @ YA		7	7	7			7	7	7	111100	A YA
88.5 * @ YB		8	8	8			8	8	8	001110	A L4A (YB)
91.5 * @ ZZ		9	9	9			11	11	9	111011	A ZZ
94.8 * @ ZA		10	10	10			12	12	10	011101	B L5 (ZA)
97.4 * @ ZB			11	11			13	13	11	111010	B ZB
100.0 * @ 1Z		11	12	12			14	14	12	001101	A 1Z
103.5 * @ 1A		12	13	13			15	15	13	011100	B 1A
107.2 * @ 1B		13	14	14			16	16	14	001100	A 1B
110.9 * @ 2Z		14	15	15			17	17	15	011011	B 2Z
114.8 * @ 2A		15	16	16			18	18	16	001011	A 2A
118.8 * @ 2B		16	17	17			21	21	17	011010	B 2B
123.0 * @ 3Z		17	18	18			22	22	18	001010	A 3Z
127.3 * @ 3A		18	19	19	1	A	23	23	19	011001	B 3A
131.8 * @ 3B		19	20	20	7	G	24	24	20	001001	A 3B
136.5 * @ 4Z		20	21	21	5	E	25	25	21	011000	B 4Z
141.3 * @ 4A		21	22	22			26	26	22	001000	A 4A
146.2 * @ 4B		22	23	23	2	B	27	27	23	010111	B 4B
151.4 * @ 5Z		23	24	24			28	28	24	000111	A 5Z
156.7 * @ 5A		24	25	25	6	F	31	31	25	010110	B 5A
162.2 * @ 5B		25	26	26			32	32	26	000110	A 5B
167.9 * @ 6Z		26	27	27	3	C	33	33	27	010101	B 6Z
173.8 * @ 6A		27	28	28	8	H	34	34	28	000101	A 6A
179.9 * @ 6B		28	29	29			35	35	29	010100	B 6B
186.2 * @ 7Z		29	30	30			36	36	30	000100	A 7Z
192.8 * @ 7A		30	31	31	4	D	37	37	31	010011	B 7A
203.5 * @ M1		31	32	32			38	38	32	000011	A 7B
206.5 @ 8Z			33								
210.7 * @ M2		32	34	33				1	33	010010	B 8Z
218.1 * @ M3		33	35	34				2	34	000010	A 8A
225.7 * @ M4		34	36	35				3	35	010001	B 8B
229.1 + 9Z			37								
233.6 * @ M5		35	38	36				4	36	000001	A 9Z
241.8 * @ M6		36		37				5	37	010000	B 9A
250.3 * @ M7		37						6	38	000000	A 9B
254.1 0Z											
N/A							9	9			
N/A							10	10			
N/A							19	19			
N/A							20	20			
N/A							29	29			
N/A							30	30			

A=CTCSS Frequency in Hz

B=EIA & Motorola Private Line (PL) Designators

C=ICOM (IC-H16, IC-U16, IC-U2, IC-V100, IC-U400, IC-U200)

D=Johnson

E=Relm/Regency (RH250 & RH256 Series), Wilson (WU1510)

F=Selected EMS Radios; Motorola (PX300) and GE

G=Same as 'F'

H=Wulfsberg Flexcomm (C-5000); Aviation Radios

I=Wulfsberg Flexcomm (C-5000), Aviation Radios; Optional Special Order

J=Ritron (Quiet-Call) Codes

K=Ritron (Quiet-Call) Code Switch Settings ("1" = Open or Off, "0" = Closed or On)

Marti Electronics RPU Units Typically Operate on 27.0 Hz'

* One of 38 EIA Standard CTCSS Frequencies

@ One of 40 Motorola Standard CTCSS Frequencies

+ 229.1 is frequently listed as 229.2

Digital Coded Squelch (DCS) Codes

Nor	Rev	Nor	Rev
017	050	* 306	071
* 023	047	* 311	664
* 025	244	* 315	423
* 026	464	325	526
* 031	627	* 331	465
* 032	051	332	455
036	172	* 343	532
* 043	445	* 346	612
* 047	023	* 351	243
050	017	356	212
* 051	032	* 364	131
053	452	* 365	125
* 054	413	* 371	734
* 065	271	* 411	226
* 071	306	* 412	143
* 072	245	* 413	054
* 073	506	* 423	315
* 074	174	* 431	723
* 114	712	* 432	516
* 115	152	* 445	043
* 116	754	446	255
122	225	452	053
* 125	365	454	266
* 131	364	455	332
* 132	546	462	252
* 134	223	* 464	026
* 143	412	* 465	331
145	274	* 466	662
* 152	115	* 503	162
* 155	731	* 506	073
* 156	265	* 516	432
* 162	503	523	246
* 165	251	526	325
* 172	036	* 532	343
* 174	074	* 546	132
* 205	263	* 565	703
212	356	* 606	631
* 223	134	* 612	346
225	122	* 624	632
* 226	411	* 627	031
* 243	351	* 631	606
* 244	025	* 632	624
* 245	072	* 654	743
246	523	* 662	466
* 251	165	* 664	311
252	462	* 703	565
255	446	* 712	114
* 261	732	* 723	431
* 263	205	* 731	155
* 265	156	* 732	261
266	454	* 734	371
* 271	065	* 743	654
274	145	* 754	116

* Motorola Digital Private Line
(DPL) Codes